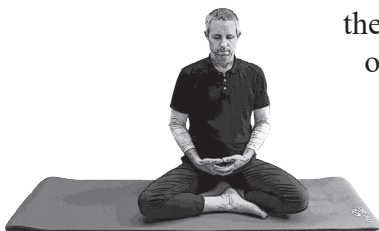


# Loving Kindness Meditation

**You may be feeling alone and separate, missing visits, or your family and friends at this time.** Perhaps you wish you could communicate kind feelings to those that feel lost to you. There is a meditation that can help you share feelings of kindness and good will, even though you're apart from those you care about. It's called *Metta* Meditation. *Metta* means love (in a non-romantic sense), friendliness or kindness. So you can also call it loving kindness meditation. It's something anyone and everyone can do and receive.

Being still as you feel the breath and practise the different stages connects you to something that goes beyond physical boundaries. We don't need to understand this. It's best to just try it out. It takes some practice. Start by setting a time each day to do it.

1. Find a spot to sit comfortably, either on a chair with your feet flat on the floor, or on a cushion or pillow on the floor or bed. With your back straight, let your body relax.
2. With your eyes softly gazing down in front of you, bring attention to the feeling of your breath.



Breathe naturally. You might notice a sense of opening and expanding as you breathe in and releasing as you breathe out. There are no right or wrong feelings.

3. Keep your attention gently focussed on this for a few minutes until you feel more settled. There may be all kinds of things distracting you – noise, thoughts and sensations. Notice if you are distracted and gently return to the feeling of your breath. This gets easier over time.
4. Think of something that makes you happy. It might be a hobby, a memory of a beautiful sunset, or a time you experienced kindness. If a positive feeling seems out of reach, especially when difficult feelings, along with others, have been blocked out, keep trying. In time these blocks dissolve.
5. As you breathe in and out, expand this feeling by silently saying, “May I be well” on an out-breath. Take around 5 breaths before you move to the next phrase
6. “May I be well.” (5 breaths)  
“May I be happy.” (5 breaths)  
“May I be safe.” (5 breaths)  
“May my mind be peaceful and calm, open and accepting.” (5 breaths)

Sometimes we might think we don't deserve these things. If that's the case, try saying the words silently anyway, without worrying too much about whether you think you are deserving.

7. Now think of someone you would like to wish well: a family member, friend, or someone you appreciate. For a couple of minutes on your out-breath, silently say the words, with 5 breaths in between each phrase.  
“May they be well.”  
“May they be happy.”  
“May they be safe.”  
“May their mind be peaceful and calm, open and accepting.”
8. When you feel ready, extend metta to everyone and everything in the world: all people and all living things. For several minutes, on an out-breath, silently say the phrases, with 5 breaths in between each again.  
“May all beings be well.”  
“May all beings be happy.”  
“May all beings be safe.”  
“May all beings be peaceful and calm, open and accepting.”

To finish, sit quietly for a few breaths or as long as you wish, simply being.

**“Kindness is more important than wisdom, and the recognition of this is the beginning of wisdom.”**

~ Theodore Isaac Rubin, psychiatrist and author, 1923 - 2019

